

Levy conciliatory after rift with Shamir

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy Monday sought to patch up his quarrel with Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, saying he was "not looking for any rift" with his old party rival. The statement followed a meeting Sunday intended to settle differences that grew out of Mr. Shamir's decision to head Israel's delegation to the Madrid peace talks, displacing Mr. Levy from that role. "I was not looking for any rift," Mr. Levy said. "The meeting was businesslike. It will have a continuation tomorrow or the day after tomorrow. I am guided by responsibility for this important, essential area of our life and I am convinced that he (Mr. Shamir) is too." After Mr. Shamir brushed Mr. Levy aside as head of the delegation to last week's peace conference, Mr. Levy refused to even travel to Madrid. Mr. Shamir included four foreign ministry officials in the 14-member team, but none was given a major role. On Friday, the ministry's acting director-general, Yosef Hadas, left abruptly, saying Mr. Shamir showed "contempt" for his ministry. But Monday, Mr. Levy denied suggestions that he ordered Mr. Hadas to return and added: "I hope this cloud will pass and there will be no more harm to the foreign ministry."

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Europeans reaffirm support for Jordan

BRUSSELS (Petra) — Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber Monday discussed with his British, German, Italian and French counterparts the latest developments in the peace process and Jordan's relations with the European countries. The European ministers voiced their countries' appreciation of Jordan's constructive role in the region and affirmed the need to support the Kingdom in its endeavours to deal with the economic situation it is going through. The meeting was attended by Planning Minister Ziad Fariz and Jordan's Ambassador in Brussels Talal Sat' an Al Hassan. Jordan and the European Community (EC) Commission were due to meet late Monday to discuss enhancing cooperation. Finance Minister Basel Jardaneh left Amman for Brussels Monday to join Dr. Abu Jaber and Dr. Fariz at the talks.

Jordan: Palestinian file opened in front of the world

Masri: Arabs aware of pitfalls, will not allow differences in approach to exceed certain limits
Premier discloses consultations with parliamentary blocs, says 'results will be seen in a few days'

By Nermene Marad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Arab delegations which have opened peace talks with Israel are aware of the possible pitfalls and will not allow the conflict with Israel to be turned into a conflict among Arabs themselves as a result of unilateral actions, Prime Minister Taher Masri said Monday.

"It is not required that we should all move at the same speed but we cannot be divided or make unilateral agreements," the prime minister said.

"There is no written commitment on those points but a binding political and moral one," Mr. Masri said in an interview with the Jordan Times.

The first phase of the Middle East peace conference has ended mostly in favour of the Palestinians and the differences in

approach adopted by the Arab delegations to bilateral talks with Israel were procedural and not of substance, Mr. Masri said.

"... The Palestinian file has been opened in front of the world," Mr. Masri said. "The Palestinian performance was very good and so was the performance of the Jordanian delegation. In view of the internationally unacceptable positions of (Israel), there appears to be a support for the Arab view and in particular the Palestinian view," the prime minister told the Jordan Times in an interview.

Coordination between the Jordanian and Palestinian sides and "dealings in bilateral issues, whether Palestinian-Israeli or Jordanian-Israeli, will continue and will grow continuously," the prime minister added.

In the broad-ranging interview, the prime minister revealed that

he had launched consultations with various parliamentary blocs in an effort to reconcile before the reconvening of the regular session of Parliament in December.

"It is premature to talk about the results of such contacts but certainly they are intended to prepare for the next ordinary session of Parliament... what these contacts will result will come out in the coming few days," Mr. Masri said.

He added his primary aim behind the reconciliatory moves was to avert a crisis at this crucial juncture in Jordan's history.

On the economic front, Mr. Masri said Jordan was straining under the burden of foreign debts and had devised a series of measures aimed at addressing the problems.

Jordan is trying to further reschedule its foreign debt repay-

ments and will also redirect subsidy to the more needy and away from commercialisation.

Following is a transcript of the interview with Mr. Masri:

Q: How would you assess the Madrid phase, if we can call the opening ceremony and the ensuing bilateral talks as such?

A: It is difficult to give an accurate assessment of the results of the meeting in Madrid and the talks clarified its opening position and its aims from the conference.

There are obvious differences in positions (between the Arabs and the Israelis) but we cannot ignore that the Madrid meetings and the extensive media coverage as well as the great interest have reopened the Palestinian file in front of the world. The performance of the Palestinian delegation

(Continued on page 5)



Chief Palestinian delegate Haidar Abu Shafi (left) shakes hand with his Israeli counterpart Elyakim Rabenstein after talks in Madrid Sunday. Between them is Dr. Abdul Salam Al Majali, head of the Jordanian team

Bush: Hopes bright after Madrid

ABOARD AIR FORCE ONE (Agencies) — U.S. President George Bush said Monday he was encouraged by historic Arab-Israeli peace talks in Madrid that have "broken new ground," but cautioned that the process has a long way to go.

"The talks are progressing well. These meetings have broken new ground, in effect, establishing a new base line for considering Middle East problems," Mr. Bush said aboard the presidential jet as he headed to California for the dedication of the Ronald Reagan presidential library.

"We have a long way to go and interruptions will probably occur, but hopes are bright," Mr. Bush said.

The Bush comments, providing to reporters by White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater, came a day after Israel conducted separate unprecedented direct bilateral talks with delegations from Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and the Palestinians.

These talks followed the ceremonial opening of the peace conference in the Spanish capital which also included representatives of Egypt and other Arab observers.

Secretary of State James Baker, whose eight months of diplomacy helped convene the talks sponsored by the United States and the Soviet Union, flew back from Madrid overnight and joined Mr. Bush on Air Force One for the California trip.

Mr. Fitzwater quoted Mr. Baker as saying: "We're encouraged that the talks took place at all. They were businesslike and carried off in a constructive atmosphere."

"No one walked out in the conference on the bilateral. There is a sense of engagement now that withdrawal from negotiations.

The militant Islamic Jihad organisation issued a strongly-

(Continued on page 5)

Jordan satisfied with Madrid talks, rejects Israeli contention over 242

Jordan Times Staff Writer

AMMAN — Jordan is satisfied with the course of the Middle East peace conference so far as well as the procedures of bilateral talks with Israel in the second phase of the conference which opened in Madrid last Wednesday; it is also gratified that the Palestinian identity has been recognised by the international community, the chief Jordanian delegate to the peace talks said Monday.

"The talks are progressing well. These meetings have broken new ground, in effect, establishing a new base line for considering Middle East problems," Mr. Bush said aboard the presidential jet as he headed to California for the dedication of the Ronald Reagan presidential library.

"All drafters of 242 have agreed that it applies to all fronts and not only to the Egyptian front (the Israeli spokesman) claimed," Dr. Majali said.

Israel contends that it complied with Resolution 242 when it returned occupied Egyptian territories to Egypt under their separate peace treaty signed in 1979 and it is not bound to return any

other occupied territory — the West Bank, including Arab East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, and the Golan Heights.

The U.S. and the Soviet Union — co-sponsors of the Madrid peace conference — have reaffirmed that the basis for Arab-Israeli negotiations is Resolution 242.

In an interview with Jordan Television, Dr. Majali said the Arab-Israeli bilateral and multilateral talks would take place on two parallel tracks rather than as two phases of a process.

"The bilateral and multilateral talks will be held simultaneously," Dr. Majali said. "Maybe the bilateral negotiations will be held once again after two weeks. The multilateral talks, which will discuss issues of concern to the region as a whole, will start after

(Continued on page 5)

Arafat positive on future of peace talks

WASHINGTON (Agencies) —

Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat said Monday the Middle East peace conference had been very positive so far and he expected it would continue smoothly with the help of the United States and Secretary of State James Baker.

Interviewed on NBC Television from PLO headquarters in Tunis, Mr. Arafat reiterated his confidence in the delegation representing the Palestinians and their preference that further bilateral talks with Israel take place in Washington, Moscow or an Arab capital.

"We consider it has been going in a very positive way till now. We hope this will continue at the next stage," he said.

The historic meeting last week in Madrid, attended by Israel and Arab delegations including Jordanian-Palestinian one, was the first time Israel had held formal peace talks with Arabs from the occupied territories.

They failed to agree on a location for further talks, but Hanan Ashrawi, spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation, said in Madrid that Palestinians and their Jordanian co-delegates hoped to meet the Israelis again.

Asked about the future of the talks, Mr. Arafat said, "I am sure that it will go on smoothly because we are coordinating with our Arab brothers... to ending the building of settlements," the DFLP said in a statement.

The Damascus-based group,

led by Nayef Hawatmeh, is the

third-largest faction in the PLO.

Shamir 'proud' of his terrorist past

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, publicly called a terrorist by Syria, said Monday he was proud of everything he did while leading the most extreme Jewish group fighting in Palestine of the 1940s.

"I have to answer him?" Mr. Shamir asked reporters seeking his response to Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharaa, who last Friday waved a 44-year-old British wanted-poster of the guerrilla commander at the Madrid peace conference.

"I have always said, I always say — I am proud of everything I have done in my past," the 76-year-old prime minister said. "I do not disown a single step."

Mr. Shamir was in the triumvirate that led the terror group Lehi Meir Kahane — better known to the world as the Stern Gang — in its campaign to drive Britain from Palestine, which it administered under U.N. mandate.

The Stern Gang, whose acts shocked even other Jewish underground groups, carried out the 1944 assassination of Lord Moyne, British minister of state for the Middle East, and the gunning down in 1948 of Swedish Count Bernadotte, the United Nations peace mediator.

Mr. Shamir, however, side-stepped questioning on any role he might have had in the assassination in Jerusalem of Count Bernadotte, which led the government of the new state of Israel finally to suppress his movement.

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third-largest faction in the PLO.

of what I have done and I do not one an accounting to anyone, and certainly not Mr. Sharaa," said Mr. Shamir, who was in charge of Stern Gang operations.

Mr. Shamir had joined the Irgun, another Jewish terror group, soon after arriving in Palestine from Poland in 1935.

The group conducted assassinations and bombings against police stations, trains and government installations. In 1947, it mailed bombs to British politicians outside Palestine.

The Stern Gang had a key role in a 1948 attack on the village of Deir Yassin near Jerusalem, where hundreds of Palestinian civilians, including women and children, were cut down by gunfire.

The Syrian attack on Mr. Shamir came after Mr. Shamir himself assailed Syria, describing it as "one of the most tyrannical regimes" in the world.

The Syrian attack did not produce much reaction in Israel since the outline of the prime minister's history, although details are shrouded in the same secrecy as his decade as an Israeli spy starting in 1955, is known to most Israelis.

Mr. Shamir said Monday that the willingness of Palestinians and Jordanians to talk peace showed a "split" with Syria that was favourable for Israel.

Israel builds new Golan settlement

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel, underlining its refusal to return the occupied Golan Heights to Syria, went ahead Monday with plans to inaugurate a new settlement for Soviet immigrants on the plateau.

The afternoon ceremony was only a few hours after the first direct peace talks between Israelis and Syrians ended in Madrid with both sides reporting no progress.

Three hardline ministers in Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's cabinet said they would attend the official start of the new settlement of Kela.

Housing Minister Ariel Sharon, Agriculture Minister Rafael

Eitan and Science Minister Yehuda Neeman had all openly opposed Israel's decision to attend the U.S.-brokered Madrid peace conference.

"Our message is still like it was before," Dedi Gofer, spokesman for the Jewish settlers' council on the Golan, told Reuters. "We are going to be here forever and it does not matter what happens in Madrid."

The settlers and cabinet ministers derided the U.S. view that moving Israelis and immigrants to the occupied territories is an obstacle to peace. U.S. policy urges Israel to trade occupied territory for peace.

Under Mr. Sharon, 1,500 housing units have been started on the Golan this year.

"Every new settlement, every

(Continued on page 5)

of the Al Fajr newspaper in Arab East Jerusalem, said the Palestinians had decided to enter the peace process by participating in the Madrid peace conference.

"The train has started up and it will follow the course set by the United States," he told Reuters. "The bilateral talks are another step forward in the peace process."

Israeli negotiators met a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation in Madrid Sunday in a first direct encounter focused on the venue and procedures of future negotiations.

Palestinian and Jordanian delegations described the talks as good, but declined to disclose details.

Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, eager for peace after four years of revolt against

Nabhan Khraisheh, an editor

Tax hiked on some items, customs duty cut on others

AMMAN (Petra) — The Council of Ministers Monday announced a set of adjustments on prices of imported commodities and said that customs duty and consumer taxes will be increased on a number of commodities categorised as non-essential.

According to the announcement, there will be a reduction of customs duty on 205 types of imported products by an average of nearly 10 per cent. The re-

daction covered certain types of vegetables and fruits, processed food commodities, shoes, schoolbooks, auto spare parts and other products classified as essential.

The statement also announced increases in consumer tax on liquor, chandeliers, red bricks, cosmetics, wallpaper and other non-essential and luxury products. The statement said there will be an increase in

the prices of cigarettes at the rate of 50 fils per packet of 20 cigarettes.

Commenting on the adjustments and increases, acting Minister of Finance Abdul Karim Al Kababiti pointed out that the government has reduced customs duty on a large number of essential goods while it hiked taxes and customs duty on luxury and non-essential products.

The 1992 budget, the minister added, will contain the largest ever allocation for social services in the country's history.

Asked about the future of the talks, Mr. Arafat said, "I am sure that it will go on smoothly because we are coordinating with our Arab brothers... to ending the building of settlements," the DFLP said in a statement.

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Middle East News

France-Iran feud to be settled next month

NICOSIA (R) — Iran and France will sign a final agreement next month settling a financial dispute that has dogged relations since Tehran's 1979 Islamic revolution, the Iranian news agency IRNA reported Monday.

Mamoud Vaezi, deputy foreign minister for European and American affairs, told the Tehran newspaper Jomhuri Islam the agreement would be reached by a protocol for political, economic and cultural cooperation.

The two countries have spent two years negotiating a solution to the dispute, stemming from a \$1 billion loan which the late Shah of Iran made to the French atomic energy commission in 1974.

Mr. Vaezi, who has just returned from talks in Paris, said the agreement would be signed during a visit to Tehran by French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas. The IRNA report did not give a precise date.

France repaid a total of \$436 million by 1988. In addition to the balance, Tehran has claimed a further \$1 billion in interest.

Paris has claimed a similar sum to compensate for other contracts cancelled after 1979. A Swiss court last month ordered Iran to pay \$716 million damages to three French firms, in damages.

Mr. Vaezi said that under the

agreement Iran's shares in France's Eurodif, a uranium enrichment consortium, would be preserved.

He added that more than half the money France owed Iran would be paid within 48 hours of the agreement being signed and the balance in three instalments. He did not give any figures.

The Shah's loan was destined for Eurodif, which was supposed to supply fuel for a nuclear plant he wanted to build. The project was cancelled after the shah was toppled.

Paris severed relations with Tehran in 1987 over an Iranian embassy official's suspected implication in a wave of Middle East bomb attacks in the French capital.

Ties were renewed the following year after the last of three French hostages held by the Iranian group were freed in Lebanon.

Relations were strained again after a French judge ordered the arrest of an Iranian government official suspected of a role in the murder of former Iranian Prime Minister Shapour Bakhtiar near Paris in August.

Mr. Vaezi said the final agreement would remove all bottlenecks to the expansion of bilateral ties.



Syria appeared to relish tough role in Madrid

MADRID (AP) — With the harshest rhetoric and the most dogged bargaining tactics, Syria appears to relish its role as Israel's toughest adversary at the Middle East peace conference.

From retaliating to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's attack by calling him a terrorist to ordering over when and where to start the first bilateral talks, the Syrian delegation attracted attention and plenty of Israeli wrath.

Egypt and Saudi Arabia pursued the Syrians to proceed with the peace process but fear that they have handed the Israelis an advantage by their obstinacy.

"The Syrians succumbed to the trap Shamir put for them and are fighting every inch, every minute," said Tahseen Beshir, a former spokesman for the Egyptian government and now a political analyst.

The Syrians have become tainted in a negative way in the eyes of the West because of this position, but do not forget they are also being considered as positive in the eyes of the Arabs," Mr. Tahseen said by telephone from Cairo.

The joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation unnecessary clashes and were the first to sit down for bilateral talks with the Israelis on Sunday.

Throughout various disputes, the Syrians pointed to the Israelis as the real obstacle.

"We have come here for peace.

We shall continue to work for peace out of our faith in this peace," Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharqi told the conference.

"However, Israel would be gravely mistaken were it to interpret this Arab response as a licence for it to perpetuate its intransigent stands within the conference or any of its committees."

Syria's stance extended even to new conferences, where Mr. Sharqi refused to answer questions from Israeli journalists.

Since Egypt broke ranks with the Arabs in 1979 and signed the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, Syria has been at the forefront of the Arab drive to liberate the occupied lands.

They removed an offensive tapestry from one room, and carefully checked another in the main hall and found that although it showed the Greek god Bacchus, it did not depict his favourite beverage, wine, which might offend teetotaling Muslims.

The catering service for the press centre was not so careful, serving ham to Jews and Muslims, both of whom shun pork.

Pork was the main component in most of the estimated 123,000 sandwiches gobbled over five days by journalists, organisers and security workers who roamed through the press centre at Madrid's trade fair hall, said Vincente Clemente, spokesman for the Riesgo Cotel catering service.

Before coming to Madrid, Arab delegates met in Damascus and agreed to the Syrian demand that they adopt a united position and that no one would go ahead with a unilateral peace treaty as Egypt did.

That led to the last obstacle before Syria finally sat down with Israel on Sunday night — a dispute about the location. As a gesture of solidarity with the other Arab contingents, the Syrians insisted that their separate meetings with Israel should all be in the same place, although at different times.

For breakfast, they daily ate

3,500 croissants and other rolls,

and during the long days and nights, guzzled 6,000 litres of coffee and 7,000 cans of soda.

After the opening speech last

Wednesday by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, his compatriots kept a low profile. So low that few people noticed when Soviet Foreign Minister Boris

Baker pays tribute to Jordanian-Palestinian stand

MADRID (AP) — Here are excerpts of the news conference by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker Sunday at the Middle East peace conference:

X X X

The Madrid conference was a beginning. I think it was a good beginning. Today the parties have taken another critical step, beginning direct, bilateral negotiations between Israel and the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, Israel and Lebanon and Israel and Syria.

There have been and, as I have said before, there will be obstacles in this process to be overcome, but they have not deterred us until now and they do not, in my view, diminish the importance of what has happened this week.

X X X

In terms of a start I have to tell you that I was very pleasantly surprised by the fact that they met as long as they did, in fact that it was two sessions and generally with respect to the reports that I received.

I regret the fact that I have not been able to receive reports from the other delegations ... I have to tell you that I think that a lot of what the Palestinian representatives had to say at the conference was well received in many places around the world.

Mr. Baker said that the Palestinians had issued a statement calling for a "businesslike" approach.

"I have to tell you that I think that a lot of what the Palestinian representatives had to say at the conference was well received in many places around the world," he told reporters as the historic Madrid conference drew to a close.

The Palestinians sat face-to-face with the Israelis Sunday, and a statement issued by the Israelis and a joint Palestinian-Jordanian team called the talks "businesslike."

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker hailed the Palestinian approach.

"I have to tell you that I think that a lot of what the Palestinian representatives had to say at the conference was well received in many places around the world," he told reporters as the historic Madrid conference drew to a close.

A carabinieri spokesman said the assailant, identified as Jos

Santo Paolo de Almeida of Portugal, was arrested immediately.

The conciliatory tone of the professors and physicians who made up most of the Palestinian delegation could change the image of a people whom the Israelis have blamed for much of the violence in the region.

In his opening speech, the head of the Palestinian delegation, Dr. Haidar Abdul Shafi, dropped demands for immediate statehood and said Palestinians would agree to a transitional period of self-rule.

The Palestinians "managed to give a human face to the Arab position, refuting the Israeli extremism of (Prime Minister Yitzhak) Shamir ... said a former Egyptian government spokesman. "They were very successful."

Palestinian spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi seemed elated at her farewell news conference Sunday, thanking the media for "relaying our narrative to the rest of the world and for allowing us to speak out for ourselves, actually, for the first time in our history."

The Palestinians' progress was not perfect. The Israelis had misgivings about his participation in the Mideast peace conference because of his allegiance to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), and the offer was refused. Zahir Shah's name has surfaced in connection with a peace settlement, possibly to head a transitional government

want him in bilateral talks that were to begin Sunday. "They won't enter a room if I'm in there," Dr. Erekat said in an interview, adding that he had not decided whether to attend.

For the Israelis, who already had misgivings about his participation in the Mideast peace conference because of his allegiance to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), it was like

"blowing up the peace conference, and on the other hand, I refuse the Israeli policy of imposing and dictating on us its terms," he said.

At a news conference late Saturday, Israeli spokesman Benjamin Netanyahu did not respond directly when asked whether the Israel had objected to meeting Dr. Erekat.

"I don't want to be the cause for blowing up the peace conference, and on the other hand, I refuse the Israeli policy of imposing and dictating on us its terms," he said.

Dr. Erekat said his personal overtures to Israeli delegates at the conference have been rebuffed.

"I approached someone from the Israeli delegation ... to shake his hand, and he said, 'you embarrass me,' and he ran away."

Palestinians considered the formal opening of the peace conference a start, but "the real negotiations and test of intentions starts tomorrow," Dr. Erekat said.

The latest Erekat-inspired stir was provoked by his dress.

"I am really surprised that this keffiyeh is a symbol of peace and love and Palestinian culture provokes (Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak) Shamir," Mr. Erekat said.

"This keffiyeh is worn all over the occupied Palestinian land ... a symbol of my nation, and if this provokes them, they really need a lot of reconsideration and rethinking."

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Home News

JORDAN TIMES, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 1991 3

Race across desert to promote tourist sites

AMMAN (J.T.) — Attention this month will be focused on tourist sites in the desert and archaeological areas of Jordan which will serve as an arena for a series of activities, including a car rally organised by the El Sol Spanish magazine in cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism and Archaeology.

A ministry statement said Monday that the series of activities are designed to help market Jordan in European countries in general and in Spain in particular.

The race will follow the so-called Nabatean route covering all the archaeological and desert sites in Jordan, according to the ministry statement.

It said that nearly 50 competitors from Spain, in addition to unspecified numbers from Jordan and other countries, will take part in the car rally. The progress of the rally will be presented daily on Spain's radio and television stations through satellite, with the scenes showing the various parts of archaeological sites located along the route, the statement added.

It said the event came as a result of intensive efforts on the part of the ministry, working in conjunction with the national air carrier Royal Jordanian (RJ). Acting through tour operators and in cooperation with the media in Europe in the past few months, the ministry has succeeded in paving the way for the coming events.

The statement noted that a similar programme was organised by the Spanish magazine in Morocco last year.

It said that the rally will be held as part of the Kingdom's celebrations of His Majesty King Hussein's birthday on Nov 14. To pave the ground for the event, Minister of Tourism Abdal Karim Al Kabir Monday met with teams of Spanish journalists and spoke in detail about the tourism industry in Jordan, services offered to visitors, tourist projects underway and future plans,



Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Thabet Al Taher Monday discusses the importance of

effectively using the country's natural resources at the opening of a geologists' seminar (Petra photo)

Official cites need for Jordan to better utilise natural resources

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan needs to double its efforts to exploit its natural resources in view of the growing population and the increasing requirements of social and economic development in the Kingdom, according to Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Thabet Al Taher.

While utilising the natural resources of the country, the concerned authorities should take into account effects on the environment, which should be safeguarded for future generations, said the minister in an address at the opening of the Fourth Conference of Jordanian Geologists which started Monday.

The conference's title, "Geology in the Service of the National Economy," reflects the keenness of the Jordanian Geologists Association (JGA) to link the utilisation of natural resources to socio-economic development in Jordan, which started Monday.

He reviewed the natural and mineral wealth found in the Arab world and called on Arab countries to cooperate in their ex-

ploitation of these resources through exchange of expertise and information and the transfer of modern technology which should be placed at the disposal of developmental needs.

Mr. Taher, who stood in for Prime Minister Taher Masi in opening the two-day meetings, wished the geologists success in their endeavours to serve the national interest.

Dr. Sami Sharif, the Arab Geologists Federation secretary general, voiced appreciation of the JGA's endeavours and programmes designed to help bolster the national economy. He said that Jordanian geologists were working hard in prospecting for new minerals and water resources, adopting modern technology in utilising the existing minerals and cooperating with various organisations to achieve the aspired goal.

George Haddadin, JGA president, told the meeting that his association has been pursuing efforts to help the country exploit oil shale to produce oil. Studies

conducted by the JGA served as a basis for the phosphate, potash, fertiliser, cement, rock wool, and white cement as well as glass industries in Jordan, Mr. Haddadin said.

But, he added, a number of obstacles impede the association's activities largely due to the lack of sufficient and accurate information and data about mineral rock.

Fire causes minimal damage, no casualties

AMMAN (Petra) — A fire which broke out at a video cassette store in the Jabal Hussein area Monday completely destroyed the store's contents but caused no casualties or other damage to neighbouring stores.

A spokesman for the Civil Defence Department (CDD) said that the fire, which was apparently caused by a short circuit, engulfed the whole store, burning all its contents.

Two teams of firemen assisted by scales and cranes were rushed to the store, located on the fifth floor of the Sukaina Shopping Centre Complex, and helped to evacuate the building.

According to the spokesman, heavy smoke filled the neighbouring rooms and offices as well as stores selling clothes and other inflammable materials.

In one of the stores, large amounts of ammonia bottles were found moved to a safe place away from the heat, the spokesman added. He said that only the contents of the store were destroyed thanks to the speedy and intensive efforts of the firemen, one of whom was overcome with smoke and had to be evacuated to nearby hospital.

Traffic along the main Jabal Hussein street was temporarily disrupted to make room for the fire engines and the fire fighting operations.

Photograph exhibit depicts Gulf war

AMMAN (Petra) — An exhibition of photographs entitled "War on Culture and Creativity" was opened Sunday at the Royal Cultural Centre.

The exhibition, which is organised by the Jordanian Committee for Saving the Cultural Heritage in Iraq in cooperation with the Jordanian Popular Committee for Supporting Iraq, displays photos depicting the destruction of the Iraqi cities by the U.S.-led alliance in the Gulf war.

The official said that the new route will also help stimulate trade exchanges between Canada and Jordan and contribute towards bringing in more tourist groups and marketing Jordan abroad, especially as Toronto has a large community of Arab descent.

The official said that the maiden flight along the new route will be launched on a TriStar aircraft. At present, the flights will be made on Thursday's but a Monday flight might be added in the spring.

The official said that the decision to operate the Amman-Toronto route came after due studies and research on the part of the national airline.

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The closing date for submission tender is 12:00 hours local time Thursday Dec. 12, 1991.

Wasef Azar
Managing Director

Jordan says former West Bank Palestinians must return

By Rana Sabbagh
Reuter

AMMAN — Jordan said on Monday it would insist that more than 500,000 Palestinians who have lived in the Kingdom since the 1967 Middle East war return to the West Bank as part of any peace deal.

The Kingdom, home to nearly one million Palestinian refugees from two Arab-Israeli wars, also pledged to press for compensation for itself and those Palestinians who had lost property during the creation of Israel in 1948.

Adel Irshaid, head of the Foreign Ministry Palestinian Affairs Department, said the fate of 960,212 Palestinians registered with the U.N. as being in Jordan would be tackled during the third phase of peace talks which will also cover other regional matters such as arms control and water rights.

"Regarding those who became displaced in 1967, Jordan will insist that they return to the West Bank to join the new political situation that will

emerge there at the end of the peace talks," Mr. Irshaid, Jordan's top refugee official told Reuters, in an interview.

The U.N. figure includes 430,083 official refugees who fled their homes in areas on which the Jewish state was created in 1948. The rest, those who came to Jordan during the 1967 war when the West Bank was under Jordanian rule, are registered as displaced.

"Jordan will depend on U.N. Resolution 194 in dealing with the refugees of 1948," Mr. Irshaid said.

Resolution 194, passed in 1948, says Palestinians anywhere have the right to return or be compensated for lost property.

Officials say the bill, which has been growing in the four decades since Israel was created, totals billions of dollars.

Most officials and individuals say the refugees of 1948 would not be allowed to return as part of a peace settlement but many expect to win hefty compensation and stay in Jordan.

They say Jordan itself expects compensation for past

and future health care, education and other services.

Mr. Irshaid had no figures but said Amman would seek help from a U.N. unit set up in 1950 to assess compensation.

Jordan's Land and Survey Department, he added, had received from the United Nations all records of real estate owned by Palestinians in the pre-1948 boundaries of Israel.

Palestinians are pressing for an independent state on the West Bank and in Gaza Strip. Such a state would be in confederation with Jordan which has strong economic, political and demographic links with the Israeli-occupied territories.

The peace conference which brought Israel and its Arab foes to the negotiating table for the first time in 43 years aims at giving Palestinians autonomy over the next five years.

Negotiations about their final status are due to begin within three years.

Some lawyers are calling for compensation for refugee's real estate based on current market prices.

"Property owners should be compensated," said Raja'i Da-jani, a lawyer and a former interior minister. "Those who had no real estate should also be compensated because they were uprooted and had to start a new life in agony in the diaspora."

Mr. Da-jani said the same formula that was used by Germany to compensate the Jews for the Nazi holocaust could be used.

Many Palestinian refugees, who still have keys to the homes they left 43 years ago in the hope of returning one day, are taking a more pragmatic approach.

"No matter how hard reality is, I don't think we will ever go back," said refugee camp dweller Mousa Yousef. "But we are ready to stay here and improve our living conditions if we get good compensation."

Mr. Irshaid said Palestinians were strengthening the offices of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in Jordan to ensure they were registered as refugees.

The minister voiced Jordan's appreciation of UNIDO and of the Arab Company for Drug Industries and Medical Appliances (ACDIMA), which is the symposium's co-sponsor.

The minister said that ACDIMA has been offering valuable assistance to the pharmaceutical industries of Jordan and other Arab countries. ACDIMA Director General Muwaffaq Haddadin said that his company's activities are designed to help the Arab world attain self sufficiency in medicine production.

Delegates taking part in the three-day meetings represent ministries of health in Jordan, Oman, Bahrain, Egypt, Sudan, Yemen, Libya, Algeria, Tunisia as well as pharmaceutical companies of the Arab world.

Symposium provides forum for exchange of information in pharmaceutical field

AMMAN (J.T.) — Delegates from nine Arab countries and representatives of Arab universities and pharmaceutical industries gathered in Amman Monday for a three-day symposium on pharmaceutical support industries.

The seminar is organised here by the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) in cooperation with the Health Ministry.

The main topic for discussion is wrapping and packaging processes connected with the medicine industry in the Arab world, according to Dr. Jaafar Abdul Ghani, UNIDO representative.

Dr. Abdul Ghani reviewed UNIDO's efforts to promote the pharmaceutical industries of the Arab world, which in turn contributes towards the development of

Arab economies.

According to Dr. Abdul Ghani, the developing nations consume some 20 per cent of the world's medicines and the Arab world, along with other developing countries, needs to double its efforts to become self-sufficient in medicines.

The seminar is organised here by the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) in cooperation with the Health Ministry.

Health Minister Mamdouh Al Abbadi, who opened the sessions, underlined the importance of inter-country cooperation in the wrapping and packaging of medicines and in overcoming obstacles impeding production and marketing.

Dr. Abdul Ghani reviewed UNIDO's efforts to promote the pharmaceutical industries of the Arab world, which in turn contributes towards the development of

Arab pharmaceutical support industries.

Delegates from nine Arab countries including Jordan will be discussing a lot of diseases, particularly those affecting children and mothers, and steps to international cooperation to stem them.

Jordan seeks international cooperation to combat such diseases and provide immunisation against them, said Health Minister Mamdouh Al Abbadi.

Addressing the opening session of the "Inter-Country Workshop on Epidemiological Surveillance and Expanded Programme on Immunisation and Target Diseases," the minister said that cooperation was urgent to eradicate such diseases as polio, tetanus and measles.

Jordan, the minister said, has made big strides in the immunisation programme to combat diseases through immunisation coverage to the largest sector of the population.

A total of 44 specialists and experts are taking part in the workshop, which will also deal with matters related to the reporting and registering of infection and methods used to combat

vaccination teams reach all areas of Jordan, providing im-

polio, diphtheria and tetanus among other killer diseases.

Dr. Abdul Majid Hadi, WHO representative in Amman, read out a message by Dr. Hassan Jazairi, the WHO regional director, dwelling on means of preventing the spread of diseases through immunisation.

The WHO has been exerting strenuous efforts within the countries of the region to deal with polio, tetanus, measles and other children's diseases through national programmes, he said.

He added that further workshops and symposiums dealing with this subject should be held in the countries of the region to draw attention to immunisation programmes.

Prince visits war college

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Monday visited the Royal War College where he was briefed on its activities. Prince Hassan met with students and members of its steering committee.



Mamdouh Al Abbadi

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Seminar addresses needs and problems of small businesses

By Maha Addasi

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Chamber of Commerce, in cooperation with the Queen Alia Fund and the International Labour Organisation (ILO), Monday, started a two-day seminar entitled "Improving Your Business" to discuss methods of improving the cottage industry in Jordan, officials said.

The seminar's specifically targeted at industries that employ less than five people and which are categorised as "informal" businesses. According to informed sources, employees in this type of businesses do not get all the benefits that employees in larger businesses get.

"Industries employing five or more people are considered formal businesses so employees there get all the benefits and rights specified by the labour law," said Ali Da-jani, a consultant with the Chamber of Commerce.

"Out of weekends, annual leave, official holidays, sick leaves, severance pay and indemnities, employees in informal businesses only get their indemnities and severance pay," he said. "We are talking about 70,000 industries categorised as informal."

According to Mr. Da-jani, employees working in informal businesses, including self-employed people specialising

in vocational work and handicrafts are "the most tolerant to burdensome work and the least lucky when it comes to rights. We must give this type of workers more attention and include them under the umbrella of the social security."

The minister said the world and the regional economic recession has adversely affected the country and its labour and employment sectors.

Furthermore, he said, developments in the labour markets of the neighbouring Arab states have had their negative impact on the labour market in Jordan, affecting social and economic sectors of the Kingdom.

The regional consultant for ILO, Luma Nasr, said that the seminar aims to create awareness as the importance of these informal businesses so that they too can benefit from social security.

"We hope that as a result of this seminar we can come up with ideas and suggestions to help solve the problem of unemployment which, she said, has been aggravated with the return to Jordan by some 300,000 people from the Gulf states."

To achieve that goal, social and voluntary organisations in Jordan have been concentrating their efforts to provide training in new trades required by the local market and providing skills to Jordanian women to help them become produc-

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Bridges will be built

THE FIRST ROUND of bilateral talks between the Arabs and Israel ended on Sunday night with mixed results. On the Palestinian-Jordanian-Israeli side the first round was characterised by Dr. Abdul Salam Majali, the head of the Jordanian delegation, were "good and businesslike." There was agreement that the negotiations will be based on U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338; will be conducted on two tracks — Palestinian-Israeli and Jordanian-Israeli — and that the venue of the next round will be decided through consultations among the parties. Each side also aired its reservations and understanding.

While the first round on the Palestinian-Jordanian-Israeli front went alright, it seems it was not so on the Syrian-Israeli front. Both sides emerged from Sunday night's talks expressing frustrations. The chief of the Syrian delegate, Mufisq Alaf, described the talks as "a waste of time." And the Israeli chief, Yossi Ben-Aharon, said it was a "cause for much frustration." One encouraging signal that came from both is their agreement to meet again soon, once they decided where and when.

Despite the wide gulf that seems to separate Syria from Israel, the Madrid peace conference and the talks have so far accomplished a great deal, especially on the core issue i.e. the Palestinian question.

As Dr. Majali said: "The Palestinian identity has finally received the recognition it deserves."

The fact that the antagonists have agreed to talk in the first place, the fact that they met and their commitment to meet again are all signs that the process is progressing albeit with some difficulties on the Syrian-Israeli front. However, although clear coordination seems to be lacking between the Syrians on one side and the Palestinians and Jordanians on the other, the Syrian position must have been coordinated with Egypt and probably with the co-sponsors. While some observers contend that the Palestinians stated their position very moderately, they believe the Syrian position, that demands full Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories before peace is negotiated, is designed to put maximum pressure on Israel. No matter what maximum positions some of the parties declare, reports from Madrid indicate that the Americans are determined to push all the parties towards a settlement. U.S. Secretary of State James Baker asserted Monday that the U.S. "intend(s) to stay fully engaged, as fully engaged as we can and for as long as we think the parties are serious about peace. And for the moment I think they are serious."

Since this is the U.S. stand and since the U.S. holds all the strings in the region, the process will continue and peace should be within reach.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE ARAB countries which went to the Madrid peace talks are convinced of the U.S. promises and Washington's pledges to implement U.N. Security Council resolutions concerning the Arab-Israeli conflict; the Israelis went there because they are in no position to anger Washington, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Monday. The paper said that the Arabs view this conference as one for proving the American credibility and are now waiting to see what standard the U.S. administration is adopting with regard to the implementation of the international legality. The Arabs went to Madrid with the Gulf war on their minds; tragedies the war was waged by the U.S. in order to implement U.N. resolutions, and is causing suffering to the Arab people of Iraq, the paper said. It said that the United States and the world community at large are called on to implement the international legitimacy where the Palestine question is concerned and should impose on the Israelis respect for the world organisation which has adopted the resolutions. The paper said that as the Arab masses follow up the outcome of the talks in Madrid, they are apprehensive that the Israelis might transform the negotiations into a vicious circle eluding all attempts to make its leaders succumb to international law. The paper criticised U.S. Secretary of State James Baker for saying that he would place the blame for any failures on the two sides to the meetings. The paper said that by saying so, Mr. Baker seems to be paving the ground for absorbing the Israelis from their intransigent position or trying to oblige the U.S. administration of any blame for not being able to honour its commitments.

A columnist in Al Ra'i daily Monday said that the negotiations in Madrid are bound to lead to one of two things: the implementation of U.N. resolutions and respect for international legitimacy or the supremacy of the law of the jungle, with Israel continuing to defy the world community by maintaining its occupation of Arab land. The whole world is anxious to see whether the American credibility has any value and whether it is truly committed to the international legitimacy applying the international law on the Israelis it did on the Iraqis, said Hossi Ayesh. Should the results of the negotiations be negative, nations of the world would be quick to conclude that the so-called new world order is no more than colonialism in a new form, Ayesh said. The writer said that the first beneficiary of the Madrid parley will be Iran and all the movements and factions affiliated with the Iranian regime or those taking directives from Tehran. Iran would have the upper hand in the Arab World with special influence on those Arabs who sided by the United States in the Gulf war, said Ayesh. The writer said the United States would appeal to the whole world as a conspirator with Iran and Israel against the Arabs in general and the Palestinians in particular, if the negotiations in Madrid collapse. The writer said that the Arab countries can absorb the shock of any failure by adopting two strategies: forming a strong front grouping Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq and ending Egypt's Camp David agreements with Israel and inviting Egypt to join the eastern front to deal with Israel's arrogance.

The View from Fourth Circle

Enough junk. Time for some answers

By Rami G. Khouri

THE opening performance during the first week of the Madrid peace conference went more or less as expected, and, I would suggest, were largely irrelevant. The fact that the proceedings were televised live guaranteed that the ceremonial opening days would be more showbusiness than getting down to the business of peace making, and this is exactly what happened.

Now begins the real work of negotiating justice, implementing U.N. resolutions, promoting coexistence, and perhaps enjoying peace. From what happened in Madrid, however, it seems that the real work will need some more time to begin. I say this not only because of the evasive and hardline position of the Israelis, who still refuse in public to discuss the principle of exchanging territory for peace, but also because of the garbage morality of the United States.

The whole peace conference has been portrayed as the fruits of herculean American efforts, in the face of colossal odds due to an inveterate spirit of warmongering that permeates every drop of Arab and Israeli blood. Two separate processes are at work, both of them sad and unhelpful. On the one hand, the Western media itself obviously swallowed the self-congratulatory but deceptive line put out by the American government, to the effect that Washington is making enormous efforts to bring the Israelis and the Arabs to the negotiating table. On the other hand, the Americans themselves, in the persons of George Bush and James Baker, are assuming the false posture of innocent bystanders, disinterested mediators driven only by their desire to do good, and to bring peace to our troubled region.

Mr. Baker's closing remarks on Friday were particularly offensive, and his presumptuousness quite sickening. As he exhorted the people of the Middle East to overcome historical conflicts and make peace, he wanted us to believe that while the Arabs and Israelis killed each other the United States was an uninvolved and distant party. The fact is, peacemaking is so difficult today largely because the United States has spent over \$45 billion in the last several decades making sure that Israel remains militarily stronger than the combined forces of its Arab neighbours. The combination of American financial support for the Israeli occupation of Palestine and American political acquiescence in the Zionist political subjugation of the region has been anger and tensions rise to the point where peace-making is so difficult today.

Instead of coming to terms with the truth of the recent past, and recognising its role as one of the major actors in the Arab-Israeli conflict, Washington prefers to retreat into its make-believe world of righteousness and innocence. This is pure garbage morality at its American best, lies in the guise of impartial information — embellished with electronic wizardry, live satellite transmission, and the slightly frenzied predisposition of an American-dominated Western media that was so servile in parroting Washington's view of the Gulf war earlier this year that it remains driven by the momentum of its own ignorance of history, and the fears and insecurities of young men and women reporters who dread getting

lost in the bazaars of Middle Eastern reality.

The reality is very different, and obviously very hard for most Western journalists to understand. Let us recognise precisely what we are being offered these days — this is the first installment of the new world order history being presented to us by the dangerous combination of American generals, oil men in politicians' clothing, and corporate leaders. This is the first attempt to rewrite contemporary history in the gobbledegook language and fuddy-duddy morality of George Bush's neo-colonial order — but the attempt is spurious and demeaning, and it will not work. It is in our best interest and that of the Americans themselves that they hear this and understand it.

The whole point of the Madrid process — the reason the Arabs are there in force — is that it has turned the traditional power flows of this region on their head. It has shifted the region's focus from military to political confrontation, and it has replaced the criteria of strength of arms with those of moral force. American Cruise missiles and Israeli air force jets have no meaning in Madrid.

The Americans will have a crucial role to play in the peace negotiations. Like the Israelis, they are trying to delay as long as possible the hard task of leaving their comfortable but violent world of make-believe, and returning to the real world of chronic Middle Eastern conflict — chronic conflict that is fuelled by a predatory and intemperate Zionist movement largely funded and protected by the United States government. But very soon — in about two months, I predict — Washington will have to end its demeaning performance, and it will have to come down to earth and grapple with the Israeli monster it has spawned.

The Arab parties have all made it clear that they are willing to negotiate with the Israelis and to live in peace with an Israeli state, but only if that Israeli state itself recognises the national rights of the Palestinians and lives in peace with a self-determinant Palestinian national entity. This is a negotiation to bring peace by offering justice and legitimate rights to all parties. It is not, as the Israelis would like, a jamboree to celebrate the supremacy of Jewish heritage and rights. Nor is it, as the Americans seem to prefer, a lottery in which each party puts down its money on the table and waits to find out if the owner of the casino is fair, which would determine what each party may or may not win.

The Arabs have made it clear that we are willing to give Israel and the United States virtually all they ask for, but only if and when we get our rights as well. In return, we have heard nothing substantial from the Israelis about their willingness to meet our legitimate demands. They talk of coexistence, but not inalienable rights. They talk of their history and religion, but not about compliance with U.N. resolutions.

Very soon, the United States will face the moment of reckoning. Will it or will it not use its considerable political and economic power to nudge Israel to comply with U.N. resolutions and to withdraw from occupied Arab lands, so that the Arabs in

return would make simultaneous gestures to Israel? This remains the crux of the matter in our eyes, and to wish it otherwise would be to engage in the sort of self-demeaning political fantasies that American leaders now offer us.

The first week of negotiations in Madrid was the last grasp of the past. It consisted mostly of old rhetoric and known positions. There was no real movement — but then, there never is out of television cameras than demand show business above all else. The entertainment value in Madrid was high, the political content low. American officials tried but failed to exonerate themselves from their share of the blame for the warfare and mistrust that grip the region. They tried to turn this into a political Biblical epic, a moving drama of old warriors who suddenly see God, sit next to George Bush for a fleeting moment, grasp the truth, embrace religious ethics, and vanquish ancient hatreds and injustices. But the world does not work like that. Life is not a television drama. History is out encapsulated in neat ten minute segments that are conveniently scheduled between carpet cleaners and beer commercials. The junk that permeates political morality in Washington does not travel well around the world.

And so, my instincts tell me, forget about everything that happened last week in Madrid, and for that matter ignore everything else that happens in the next several weeks. The real crunch will come sometime down the road when Israel runs out of excuses to delay or shift the focus of the peace talks, and Washington finally comes to grips with its substantial responsibility for events in the Middle East. We may not be pleased with Washington's performance to date, but nevertheless we continue to work with it because the promise of peace and justice is so immense, and so important for everyone in this region. Even those who sell us junk will realise one day that there are no more buyers for their wares, and they will have to sell us something more appealing.

The fact that the Arabs are all in Madrid in strength is a sign that we are not deterred by the tactics of the Israelis or uncertainties about the capacity of the Americans to shift their political mode from rubbish to responsibility. Peace will come only when justice is done, and justice cannot be done if the Americans give Israel one of billions of dollars a year in order to maintain Israel's military dominance of the region and its colonisation of Palestine.

The moment of historical reckoning is near. Very soon, we shall learn the answers to questions we have long asked: Can the Americans convince or force the Israelis to live according to the rules that everyone else in the world is asked to live by? Will U.N. resolutions be implemented in and adjacent to Palestine as they are in Kuwait and Iraq? Do the Israelis have greater rights than Palestinians? Is Israel's security more important than the security of adjacent Arab states? To date, Washington has avoided answering these questions, preferring instead to give us consecutively larger doses of junk. We've had enough junk. Now we expect answers.

The old fox who will take on the Israelis

By Michael Ignatieff

The following article is reprinted from the Oct. 27 issue of the Observer.

THE MAN leading the Palestinian delegation to the Madrid conference this week, Haidar Abdul Shafi, once served me tea in his home in Gaza City. The year was 1988, the intifada was in its sixth month, and I was there to persuade him to take part in a BBC series bringing Israelis and Palestinians together around a table to talk.

The programmes we made then included three of the key members of the delegation to this week's conference — Hanan Ashrawi, the American-educated dean of the Bir Zeit University; Saeb Erekat, the bluff, outspoken lawyer from Nablus; and the thin, courtly man of few words, Haidar Abdul Shafi.

He had been a doctor in Gaza all his life, arrested by the Egyptians when they had Gaza, and then by the Israelis when they took it over. His English was soft and accented and he measured every word.

To the Palestinians, he was the wily elder statesman of the "inside" leadership. To the Israeli authorities in Gaza, of course, he was a troublemaker, an associate of terrorists.

He said to me then that Israel had a choice: either it made peace with people like him, or it would have to wage war for its survival with the Islamic fundamentalists, then already well established in the camps. Israel has decided, at last, to talk to the doctor from Gaza.

You can't understand Palestinian bitterness unless you have been to Gaza. Just beyond the gates of Abdul Shafi's austere, seat, bourgeois house the nightmare of Gaza begins: the mile upon mile of refugee camps in the sands of Gaza beach, the burning barricades, the overturned cars, the knots of Palestinian youths, their faces masked by headscarves, taunting the Israeli patrols. Over everything hangs the characteristic Gaza stench, composed of burning tyres, rotting sewage and the acrid tang of the sea.

The world is full of places where you think this can't go on, and it does, year after year, decade after decade. Gaza is such a place.

Everyone has excuses for Gaza. Israelis tell you it was just as bad under the Egyptians before 1956; they tell you the Arab states closed their doors to the Palestinians, which is why they



M.KAHIL

be still in these wretched camps, but when you've heard all the excuses, the truth is as evident as the stench. The place is a disgrace to the internationalisation of the region.

In 1988, the intifada had the Israelis on the run. Their stone-throwing degenerated into random stabbings of Israelis and victimisation of Palestinians accused of collaboration with the occupiers. World opinion swung away from the Palestinians; the Israeli bung on, and the Palestinian leadership watched their international support drain away. With the Palestinian support for Iraq during the Gulf war, Palestine had already sunk to its nadir.

During the Gulf war, when the Patriots were sent to defend Tel Aviv, the gesture appeared to confirm Israel's pride of place as America's prime Middle East partner. In fact, it was the moment when America began to dictate the terms of Israel's security. The Bush administration's decision to withhold the \$10 billion loan package in September set the seal on a decisive policy shift. It forced the Israelis to the table.

It is also evident that the American administration has been working, behind the scenes, to undermine the credibility of the Israeli claim that it is menaced on all sides by hostile powers bent on driving it into the sea. Without covert assistance from American government agencies, Seymour Hersh would never have been able to dig up the size of Israel's nuclear arsenal — 300 warheads of all types, from artillery shells to missiles capable of reaching the southern Soviet Union. America wants the territories to be a credible competitor to the West Bank, suspicious of the process in Madrid. The endless, brutalising occupation of the territories cannot go on, for Israel's sake, for the Palestinians' sake. The year by year degradation of Israel into a high security state, the year by year rise of rancour and hatred between Israelis and Palestinians will end up destroying the best to both of them. No one around the table needs to like, respect or trust the other side. All they need to agree upon is: this can't go on.

This is not a fanciful expectation. The Palestinians believe that, for the first time in 40 years, American policy has begun to move away from the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982. The Reagan administration began to realise that the Israeli determination to search out and destroy the Palestinian leadership was destabilising the entire region. As the Soviet empire began to crumble and the Soviets ceased to

be a credible competitor to the region, American policy-makers began to ask whether they really needed the Israelis. The two former Texas oil men who run American foreign policy didn't have much trouble coming to the conclusion that America's long-term interests lay where the black gold was.

To the Palestinians, he was the wily elder statesman of the "inside" leadership. To the Israeli authorities in Gaza, of course, he was a troublemaker, an associate of terrorists.

He said to me then that Israel had a choice: either it made peace with people like him, or it would have to wage war for its survival with the Islamic fundamentalists, then already well established in the camps. Israel has decided, at last, to talk to the doctor from Gaza.

You can't understand Palestinian bitterness unless you have been to Gaza. Just beyond the gates of Abdul Shafi's austere, seat, bourgeois house the nightmare of Gaza begins: the mile upon mile of refugee camps in the sands of Gaza beach, the burning barricades, the overturned cars, the knots of Palestinian youths, their faces masked by headscarves, taunting the Israeli patrols. Over everything hangs the characteristic Gaza stench, composed of burning tyres, rotting sewage and the acrid tang of the sea.

The world is full of places where you think this can't go on, and it does, year after year, decade after decade. Gaza is such a place.

Everyone has excuses for Gaza. Israelis tell you it was just as bad under the Egyptians before 1956; they tell you the Arab states closed their doors to the Palestinians, which is why they

Haidar Abdul Shafi also pleaded with delegates to rise above static and bardset concepts." He said Jordan on Sunday put peace efforts above Arab unity and took charge of their own fate. It was a development which could have momentous implications for Israeli-Arab peace efforts and shift the balance of power within the Arab World.

Even before Sunday, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker had praised the courage of Palestinian leaders from the Israeli-occupied territories. He said they may have put their lives at risk by agreeing to come to the Madrid peace conference. But their pursuant appearance for historic talks with Israel, when it was still far from clear whether separate Syrian-Israeli negotiations would get underway, was perhaps an even bolder stroke.

It made it clear that the Palestinians and Jordanians, backed by Egypt and Saudi Arabia, would resist Syria's efforts to gain a veto over the entire Arab negotiating position.

Behind them too are the people of Gaza and the West Bank, suspicious of the process in Madrid. The rift to the Arab world lies Syria's fear that it has little to gain from negotiations with Israel and may end up isolated.

But Saudi Arabia and Jordan, normally known for taking bold positions against Syria's wishes, said they would attend the talks with or without Damascus.

Behind them too are the people of Gaza and the West Bank, suspicious of the process in Madrid. The rift to the Arab world lies Syria's fear that it has little to gain from negotiations with Israel and may end up isolated.

While the Israelis are ready to discuss self-rule with the Palestinians and the Palestinians are desperate to ease the heavy burdens of living under Israeli military occupation, the Israelis say they will not return an inch of the occupied Golan Heights to Syria.

U.S. officials think it may be possible to progress on the Palestinian-Israeli front even if the Syrian-Israeli talks reach deadlock.

But they believe progress would be considerably easier if the Syrians remain involved.

Syria made the key breakthrough possible by agreeing to come to Madrid and abandoning its rejectionism. Reverting to its former position could jeopardise all the gains made so far.

<p

Sports

Kasparov assured of winning in Tilburg

TILBURG, Netherlands (AP) — World champion chess player Gary Kasparov of the Soviet Union assured himself the title of the 15th annual Interpolis Chess Tournament Sunday without touching a piece or even showing up in the arena.

The decisive victory, which nets the world champion \$12,500 of the \$55,000 total prize fund in this strongest tournament ever held, was not his own doing but that of Indian grandmaster Viswanthan Anand.

Ironically, Anand gave Kasparov a helping hand not by winning but by losing.

With only Monday's final round to go, Anand, known as Vishy, was lagging 1.5 points behind the world champion in the tournament standings. But he had a favourable ending in his adjourned game with black from last week's 11th round match against U.S. champion Gata Kamsky and felt sure he would narrow the gap to half a point in Sunday's completion.



Gary Kasparov

ly Karpov. However, Kasparov is 1½ points clear of the field and will win the tournament even if he loses to the former world champion.

Before resumption, Kasparov offered to call the game a draw, but Anand turned down the offer because even though he was an exchange down, he had passed pawns on either wing well on their way to promotion on the first rank.

About 25 moves into the resumption, Anand had made little headway but still felt secure enough to refuse a second peace bid. He soldiered on hoping for a position where he could force a pawn breakthrough.

When at last he thought the moment had arrived, his pawn push at the 98th proved a blunder that left him with no more than an equal position, and by adding another error one move later he lost the game.

Suddenly, the black king was trapped in a mating net. Speechless, Anand surrendered on his 101st.

In Monday's 14th and final round, Kasparov is pitted with white against his archenemy and fellow Soviet grandmaster Anatoly

Garcia, McColgan win New York Marathon

NEW YORK (R) — Liz McColgan backed up a bold prediction — and took away \$45,000 and a Mercedes-Benz car — by winning the New York City Marathon Sunday.

McColgan, women's world champion over 10,000 metres, predicted victory during the build-up for the marathon despite having never before run the distance competitively.

"I had enough confidence to know I could beat any of the girls in the field," smiling McColgan said after her triumph. "Next time I'll be a little better prepared and go for a better time."

McColgan's time of two hours 27 minutes, 23 seconds was good enough to bring a \$25,000 bonus as she finished a comfortable 55 seconds ahead of runner-up Olga Markova of the Soviet Union. Lisa Ondick of Australia was third in 2:28.53.

Salvador Garcia won the men's race in 2:09.28 to beat compatriot Andres Espinoza by 32 seconds. Garcia's time brought him a bonus of \$35,000 in addition to the \$20,000 prize for first place.

Neither McColgan, nor her competitors, knew what to expect as the race took the Scot into uncharted distance. But the Florida-based champion got stronger and increased her lead in the final stages of the race.

"I found the course easier than I thought," said the 27-year-old McColgan, who ran with her hair piled straight up in a thick pony tail. "It was very hard running to hold myself back, to contain myself."

The Scot said she has a chance to eventually break the women's marathon mark of 2:21.06 set by Norway's Ingrid Kristiansen in the 1985 London Marathon.

"Today was about winning, not about times," McColgan said. "Now that I've done one, I look forward to doing it again."

"It was a good time for my debut but I know I can run a lot faster."

Speed seemed to be very much on McColgan's mind after the race.

Upon being presented with her brand new Mercedes, she said: "Thank you very much. I'm sure we'll drive fast in it."

JORDAN TIMES, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 1991

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 1991

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: The late evening finds you with many interesting ideas and a considerable amount of energy. Getting together with others can lead to a great deal of positive progress and success.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Joining with good friends and interesting acquaintances at the many interesting parties that mean anything at all to you can bring lots of fun.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You are more humanitarian than usually now and are able to see how you can be more a force in the world of outside activity and especially where social service is concerned.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You can certainly join with newsworthy in the things they like to do the most and find out the various factors that have made them a success.

MONS CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Listen to that prophetic hunch that is trying to give you the right hint so you can make better progress in your dealings with others.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Take some time out to show you are socially minded and a great entertainer whether socially or where your own hangups, talents are concerned.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You need to establish some kind of a routine to prepare yourself for future enter-

the one who does understand how others would like to help them with their concerns to do it their way and yours.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You can have a wonderful day so get your duties in back of you early and arrange to meet those with whom you would like to join the recreation.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) This is your time to show you know what is basic and what is fluff and if you concentrate upon new age methods you can bring more substance all well.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Now you are able to find the various activities that bring you in touch and in greater accord with those whom you consider to be your equals.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You need to update your property, your possessions, your income so you can have more prosperity when needed in which could be approaching.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Think out what you would like to be doing more accord with your personal interests and then get in touch with them and let them know what is in your mind.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) This is your time to make sure you are

Robson quits international soccer

LONDON (R) — Bryan Robson, Manchester United's former England captain, quit international football Monday.

Robson, who played for his country in three world cups, announced his decision after he was omitted from England's squad for a vital European Championship qualifier against Poland in Poznan on Nov. 13.

England manager Graham Taylor explained that Robson was ready to quit after he gained

his 90th cap in the disappointing 1-0 win over Turkey last month but was persuaded by United manager Alex Ferguson to wait and see if he was selected for the Poland trip.

"If I had selected Bryan for Poland he would have delayed his retirement but he's 34 and together with Alex has come to realise it is getting more difficult for him to play every three days," Taylor said.

Added Taylor: "Bryan has been as good as anyone in recent games but he measures himself as being better."

"I have tremendous admiration for all he has done for England over the past decade but nothing don't go on for ever."

Robson first stepped onto the England stage against Ireland in October 1980.

He was dubbed "captain marvel" for his inspirational midfield

performances by former England manager Bobby Robson and would easily have passed the 100-cap mark but for a series of serious injuries.

Ferguson welcomed the retirement of his club captain from the international arena.

"Bryan has done more than his share for England and everyone knows this," he said. "He has been a wonderful ambassador for club and country. I think he's made the right decision."

Sampdoria faces possible exit

By Reuters

ITALIAN champions Sampdoria, struggling in the shadow of AC Milan's great achievements before them, face possible elimination from the European Cup before even reaching the new round robin stage.

Sampdoria, who sank to sixth from bottom in the league after a 2-1 defeat at Napoli Sunday, must come back from a 2-1 first leg deficit against Honved Budapest in their second round tie with Genoa Wednesday.

In contrast to Sampdoria, Italy's illustrious trio of absentees from European competition this season, Milan, Juventus and Napoli occupy the top three spots in the league table.

"Milan get under way," ran a banner headline in the sports daily Gazzetta dello Sport Monday after the 1989 and 1990 European Champions had crushed as Roma 4-1.

One point clear of Juventus and with a game in hand, Milan played perhaps their best soccer of the season against a Roma side without Brazilian defender Aldair, Italy midfielder Giuseppe Giannini and German striker Rudi Voeller.

crushing 4-0 victory over bottom-of-table Nancy Friday.

"The victory against Nancy was ideal for our preparation especially as our three strikers showed they were in form," said Belgian coach Raymond Goethals, standing in for Yugoslav Tomislav Ivic who has taken a two-week break.

England's Chris Waddle and Trevor Steven, Ghana's Abedi Pele and France's ace marksman Jean-Pierre Papin all scored for Marseille, who are 3-2 up on the Czechoslovak champions but well aware two away goals could stand Sparta in good stead.

Spanish champions Barcelona have a 2-0 cushion going into the second leg of their European Cup tie at Kaiserslautern in Germany, but they are struggling to find form in the league and were lucky to escape with a 2-2 draw away to Logrono Sunday.

Injury to defender Alberto Ferrer added to Johan Cruyff's selection problems. Cruyff already had Basque striker Juan Goikoetxea and full back Juan Carlos on the injured list, while international midfielder Guillermo Amor has one more game of a five-match suspension from

European competition to serve.

Atletico Madrid, 3-0 winners at home to Manchester United in the first leg of their second round Cup Winners' Cup tie, have gone off the boil in the league but are still in second place after a 1-0 weekend victory over Osasuna.

Apart from a doubt about midfielder Juan Vizcaino, coach Luis Aragones should be able to field a full strength side for the second leg in Manchester.

The Cup Winners' Cup holders emerged from a lean spell during which they fell from the top of the English first division as well as losing in Madrid by reclaiming top spot with a fighting 2-0 home win over Sheffield United Saturday.

Dutch champions PSV Eindhoven are determined to win a tough European Cup clash with Anderlecht in Brussels and reach the third round. The first leg ended in a goalless draw.

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Financial Markets in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	NEW YORK CLOSE Date 1/11/91	SINGAPORE CLOSE Date 1/11/91
Sterling Pound	1.7675	1.7648
Deutsche Mark	1.6445	1.6476
Swiss Franc	1.4435	1.4485
French Franc	5.6235	5.6298**
Japanese Yen	129.75	129.65
European Currency Unit	1.2445	1.2456**

**Ind Per STG

**European Opening + 100 p.m. GMT

Demand/Supply Interest Rates Date: 4/11/91

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.18
Sterling Pound	10.45	10.25	10.31	10.12
Deutsche Mark	9.00	9.37	9.37	9.37
Swiss Franc	7.61	6.25	6.25	6.06
French Franc	6.99	9.18	9.24	9.24
Japanese Yen	6.15	6.09	5.87	5.59
European Currency Unit	9.56	9.81	9.87	9.87

Interest bid rate for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Precious Metals Date: 4/11/91

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm ²	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm ²
Gold	356.75	6.85	Silver	4.08	.090

Central Bank of Jordan's Exchange Rate Bulletin

Date: 4/11/91

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6340	0.6360
Sterling Pound	1.2072	1.2132
Deutsche Mark	0.4157	0.4178
Swiss Franc	0.4729	0.4753
French Franc	0.1222	0.1216
Japanese Yen	0.5262	0.5288
Dutch Guilder	0.3690	0.3708
Swedish Krona	0.1140	0.1146
Italian Lira	0.0554	0.0557
Belgian Franc	0.0984	0.0994

Per 100 Other Currencies Date: 4/11/91

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7850	1.7950
Lebanese Lira	0.0772	0.0777
Saudi Riyal	0.1821	0.1831
Kuwaiti Dinar	—	—
Qatari Riyal	0.1855	0.1865
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2100
Omani Riyal	0.7710	0.7610
UAE Dirham	0.1855	0.1865
Greek Drachma	0.3608	0.3808
Cypriot Pound	1.4796	1.4900

Per 100 AS Indices for Amman Financial Markets

Index	2/11/91	Close	3/11/91	Close
All-Share	124.57	124.57	—	—
Banking Sector	105.11	105.19	—	—
Insurance Sector	125.18	126.39	—	—
Industry Sector	154.29	153.95	—	—
Services Sector	132.51	132.15	—	—

December 31, 1990 = 100

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

NIKKEI — The market was closed for a national holiday. Trading will resume on Tuesday. On Friday the Nikkei average closed 3.04 points or 0.71 per cent down at 25,044.24.

ASX — Scattered selling in the resources sector left the market weaker. The All Ordinaries Index closed 2.4 points down 1,681.7.

HONG KONG — The market rose on the back of Friday's 1.5-point cut in interest rates. The Hang Seng Index ended 45.22 up to close at 4,083.84.

SINGAPORE — Shares closed mixed in lacklustre trading ahead of Tuesday's holiday. The Straits Times Industrial Index closed 24 points higher at 1,418.76.

MUMBAI — The market was closed for the Hindu festival of Diwali holiday. Trading will resume on Thursday. The Bombay Stock Exchange index closed 19.96 points higher at 1,909.80 on Friday.

Arms makers still see main markets in M.E.

DUBAI (R) — Arms merchants, unimpressed by the peace talks between Israel and its Arab foes, turned out in force in Dubai Sunday convinced the Middle East remains one of the last promising arms markets in the world.

The Dubai '91 airshow has attracted more than 400 defence firms, all eager to sell weapons to nations for whom the Gulf war was a graphic illustration of the need for self-defence.

"In our view all of the Gulf countries have come to the realisation that they have to increase their defence capabilities as a result of the war," said Aldo Massara, president of Raytheon's Saudi Arabian program.

The chairman of Thomson-CSF said that despite proceeding with major arms sales to the Middle East, there is going to be a period of deep analysis over who gets what." James Lewis, president of Raytheon's Saudi Arabian program.

"We do not believe in the words to photonshares theory," Thomson-CSF Chairman Alain Gomez told Reuters in an interview.

Paris-based Thomson-CSF would continue with its strategy of expanding its defence activities through selective acquisitions, joint ventures and cooperation agreements, he said.

"There are only two growth areas in the world — the Middle East and the Far East," said a European industry official who asked not to be named.

"Obviously the Middle East peace talks could change that, but my view is that the talks won't have much of an effect, certainly not in the short term," he pointed out.

Mr. Massara said that despite the talks countries in the region would still have to defend themselves. "The history of the Middle East is such that even with a successful peace conference people are going to have to defend themselves."

Industry officials at the conference, which opened Sunday, predict the peace talks will drag on for years, leaving the region's appetite for arms as strong as ever.

"Right or wrong, we believe that we don't need that," he said. "We believe that by strictly capitalising on positions in our core businesses in defence we can fare well financially."

Mr. Gomez repeated earlier forecasts that Thomson-CSF, whose products include missile systems, fighter aircraft, electro-optics and flight simulators, would report higher profits through 1993 despite the expected decline in world arms sales following the end of the cold war.

Thomson-CSF had net attributable profit of 2.12 billion francs (\$390 million) in 1990.

Mr. Gomez said Thomson-CSF's 1991 earnings could increase by around 5.6 per cent — its first-half net attributable income — but stressed that this was not a forecast or commitment.

Mr. Gomez said he saw overall defence spending declining in the next few years as the United States and European countries pared down their military budgets.

Some of the region's wealthiest states make no secret of their wish to arm against future attack.

Saudi Arabia, which plans to double the size of its armed forces, said last week it wants to extend its Al Yamamah air defence project.

Arms industry executives expect major new deals over the next few years but several offi-

cials said the United States was expected to win the lion's share of any big defence contracts, reflecting its dominant role in winning the Gulf war.

The new orders may not, however, be announced immediately.

But he expected the fall in Western spending to bottom out near the middle of the decade and arms spending in the Middle East and the Far East to rise throughout the period, improving the outlook for the industry towards the end of the 1990s.

"Even if we don't succeed in compensating with increased market share for the shrinking communism focuses the attention of major industrial governments on hard times in eastern Europe and the Third World.

In recent years, 14 creditor governments have forgiven more than \$30 billion owed them by nearly 150 countries, World Bank officials estimate.

"Step by step there are more and more precedents to write some of the debt off the books," said Ernest Preng, former chief economist at the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Eventually, even some of the Soviet Union's \$65 billion debt will have to be forgiven, said Mr. Preng, now an economics analyst at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies.

"We will try to make the most of the market opportunities, wherever they lie, but we don't think that will be enough," he added.

"Therefore we also have a very definite ... policy of extending our base, which means participating in the quite large restructuring ... in the Western world's defence industry," he noted.

He said further restructuring of Europe's defence industry, with increasing cross-border mergers and joint ventures, was desirable because national markets could not support the necessary research and development spending.

Neither are we believers in big diversification strategies, like if you put a few billion francs on the table and buy ... an automotive electronics or telecoms business," Mr. Gomez said, adding Thomson-CSF had considered and rejected both options.

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New world order may put in order global debt disorder

WASHINGTON (AP) — Debt forgiveness is becoming part of the new world order as the fall of

communism focuses the attention of major industrial governments on hard times in eastern Europe and the Third World.

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Millions stay at home in 'biggest South African strike ever'

JOHANNESBURG (R) — Millions of black South Africans went on strike Monday in what labour unions called the biggest stoppage in the country's history and a massive vote of no confidence in the white government.

The two-day protest against the imposition of value added tax (VAT) was baptised in blood. An eve-of-strike battle between rival black factions on a gold mine killed 15 and wounded 43.

At least 19 other blacks died in sporadic outbreaks of township warfare across the country Sunday. It could not be determined if these deaths were linked to the labour unrest or were the result of continuing political fighting that has killed more than 3,000 in black townships in the past year.

Jay Naidoo, head of the umbrella Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), said three million workers had stayed at home to protest against VAT which many label an "apartheid tax." Protesters say it unfairly penalises poor blacks by raising the prices of basic foods.

"Initial information indicates this is the biggest strike ever in this country," Mr. Naidoo said.

"It is clearly almost a referendum in which people have cast a

vote of no confidence in the government."

Mr. Naidoo said between 80 and 90 per cent of black workers in cities, towns and the countryside had obeyed the strike call by COSATU and its allies, principally Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC).

He said the white government of President F.W. de Klerk had been given a powerful message that it cannot restructure the economy without the consent of the mass black movements.

Although the strike was primarily over VAT, it was seen as a major trial of strength between the government and the ANC, the biggest black party, as they prepare for negotiations on a democratic constitution.

With the government running the economy and controlling the security forces, and with anti-apartheid sanctions crumbling and its armed struggle suspended, mass action is the ANC's most powerful lever.

The ANC and its labour allies want a real say in running the transition from 300 years of white supremacy.

Government, unions and the ANC had appealed for calm during the strike and police reported

no intimidation or violence directly linked to the stoppage Monday.

Renter photographer Jude Ngwenya saw four shot and hacked bodies in the townships of Vosloorus and Katlehong east of Johannesburg Monday, but the motives for their killing were not clear.

The deaths all occurred near migrant worker hostels, strongholds of the anti-strike Inkatha Freedom Party of Zulu leader Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi. But the hostels have been focal points for violence throughout the township wars and most were peaceful Monday.

Anglo-American Corporation reported 15 killed at its President Steyn Mine at Welkom, south of Johannesburg, when strikers went to the mine.

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The industrial cities of Port Elizabeth and East London were described as being like ghost towns and the vehicle manufacturing industry in the area was at a standstill.

Mr. Naidoo said half the nation's gold miners had stopped work and that farm workers had joined a national stayaway for the first time.

Initial reports from across the country were of empty commuter trains of buses and businesses limping along, if at all, with skeleton white crews. The only



Erich Honecker

MOSCOW to extradite Honecker by end of November

BERLIN (R) — Former East German Communist leader Erich Honecker will be extradited to Germany from the Soviet Union this month to face manslaughter charges, German Justice Minister Klaus Kinkel said.

"He'll be back by the end of November," the newspaper Berliner Kurier quoted Mr. Kinkel as saying in an interview published Monday. "By the end of November all misunderstandings and formalities will be cleared up."

Mr. Honecker, toppled in a 1989 anti-Communist revolution which led to German unification, fled to Moscow last March to avoid arrest on manslaughter charges arising from shoot-to-kill orders to guards at the Berlin Wall.

His refuge was jeopardised by the collapse of Soviet Communist rule after an abortive Kremlin coup in August. Soviet officials have since implied Honecker can be extradited once legal and other issues are clarified.

Mr. Kinkel said he had secured Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher's approval to make another formal approach to Soviet and Russian republic leaders for Honecker's handing over.

Mr. Baker told reporters he would be in China Nov. 15-17 on a visit to Asia that will also take him to Korea and Japan.

"China has almost one-fourth of all the people in the world," Mr. Baker said during a departure from the main theme in a news conference about the Middle East peace talks.

China "has nuclear weapons," he added. "It has great influence in the region. It has immense economic potential."

The Bush administration has come under sharp criticism from the U.S. Congress for failing to retaliate strongly against China's bloody suppression of pro-democracy forces in June 1989.

Following the crackdown, Washington imposed a ban on high-level contacts with China, which remains in effect. But both U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger and National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft have gone to China since then, calling the trips visits rather than contacts.

Critics of China in the United States are also disturbed by China's reported sales of ballistic missiles to the Middle East and by a growing trade surplus with the United States.

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